

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



D o w n s t a t e M e d i c a l C e n t e r
450 Clarkson Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11203 • Area Code 212 UL 6-2020

College of Medicine
Department of Surgery

Mr. William Klein
Long Island College Hospital
Henry & Pacific Sts.
Brooklyn 1, N.Y.

Dear Bill:

I left the University of Minnesota to come to Brooklyn in 1951 largely at the urging of Dr. E. J. Browder and Dr. Jean Curran. These two men were acutely aware of the shortcomings of the medical profession in Brooklyn. The situation was postulated to me as being one in which someone with imagination, hard work, and a firm resolve might do a job of missionary work in improving the quality of professional care provided to the citizens of Brooklyn. This has involved a dozen years of hard work in the course of which I have twice been threatened with suit, and once Dr. Curran had the F.B.I. called in to investigate threats of personal violence against me. In spite of the difficulties in the way, I think in general an immense improvement in the quality of professional care in the Borough has developed concurrently with the development of the Medical School and the standards for which it stands.

During the past few days I have become aware, for the first time, of the nature of the agreements which the Long Island College Hospital made in drawing up a working relationship with the Prospect Heights Hospital following advice from the Hospital Council of Southern New York. I have recently had an opportunity to review in detail the credentials of those members of the staff of the latter institution who have been given title in the Long Island College Hospital, even though their privileges do not extend to that physical plant, at least as yet. On reviewing the credentials of these individuals, I can find but one man whom I would consider acceptable. The remainder of the men in question have what I would consider totally inadequate backgrounds for appointment to the surgical staff in an acceptable hospital. One man has marginal qualifications, but is known to have been dropped "for good cause" from two good voluntary hospitals in this community.

I do not know what your plans are, but I feel that in all candor I must express to you my dismay that the Long Island College Hospital has taken this regrettable step toward debasing what I have spent twelve years in trying to build up. I urgently implore you to consider in your own conscience what you

are doing lest the situation becomes such that I, for my part, in good conscience could not condone the acquisition by undergraduate medical students of any part of their education at Long Island College Hospital.

You have many excellent surgeons on the staff of the Long Island College Hospital. I would hope that you would accept their counsel in advance of any further steps

Very sincerely yours,

Clarence Dennis, M.D.
Professor & Chairman
Department of Surgery

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